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DEPARTMENT FOR ISN/CATR, T, PM/DTC, PM/RSAT
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SUBJECT: WASSENAAR ARRANGEMENT: GENERAL WORKING GROUP
REPORTING CABLE

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Classified By: Deputy Chief of Mission Geoffrey Pyatt, Reason 1.4 (d).

[11](#). (C) Summary: Discussions at the October meeting of the Wassenaar Arrangement's (WA) General Working Group (GWG) were limited. Russia's video presentation on arms sales to Georgia was the only controversial issue discussed; Ukraine and the U.S. spoke in response. The U.S. proposal to conduct an annual briefing on changes to the control lists for non-participating states attracted most of the other discussion. End Summary

Regional Views

[12](#). (C) Africa: The UK, U.S., and France all submitted papers on Africa in response to the proposal from the May GWG to focus on a specific area. The UK first discussed the Great Lakes. The Dutch noted that the influx of weapons in the Great Lakes region worsened an already unstable situation with a negative effect on security. France welcomed the proposal to devote attention to Africa and the Great Lakes region, noting that weapons in the Great Lakes increased the risk of civil war in the Democratic Republic of the Congo. France also noted the numerous UN Security Council (UNSC)-mandated reports on the situation in the Great Lakes, including expert group papers. France also emphasized that these various UNSC-mandated reports indicated that weapons were being traded for resources in eastern Congo and that supply lines were diversifying) from Somalia, to southern Sudan, to Rwanda, and that Uganda was using intermediary companies registered in the Seychelles and Israel to buy arms from China, South Africa, and Israel. The UK presented a second paper raising specific concerns about the flow of arms into the Horn of Africa, particularly small arms and light weapons and MANPADS. Participating States did not get into a long discussion on the Africa regional views, and no solutions or plans of action were presented, though some countries noted the need for development as part of a solution to the conventional arms problems in the region.

[13](#). (SBU) Georgia: After the May GWG meeting, Russia submitted a paper on Georgia in the Licensing and Enforcement Officers Meeting (LEOM) and they followed that up with a paper in the GWG. The Russian delegation supplemented these papers with a video presentation on its view of the history of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, and chastising WA Participating States for what it described as destabilizing arms transfers to Georgia which fueled the conflict. The Russian presentation included photos of seized weapons it said were used by Georgia in "large-scale aggression" noting Russian peacekeepers as well as civilians were killed by weapons provided by WA countries. Russia claimed that WA Participating States armed the Georgian military in quantities far exceeding 'reasonable defensive requirements'

and thus violated the WA Initial Elements. These Elements state that Wassenaar is aimed at contributing to regional and international security and stability by promoting greater responsibility in transfers of conventional arms. Russia also alleged that Georgia had increased its military expenditures by 50 percent in 2008, but at the same time it had not paid its dues in the OSCE, UNIDO, and had lost its voting rights in the CTBTO because of arrears.

14. (C) Ukraine and the United States were the only countries to respond to the Russian presentation. The Ukrainian delegation noted that Ukraine acts within the parameters of international control regimes, international law, and the UN, there are no restrictions on the flow of arms to Georgia. There were thus no violations of any international sanctions, and all exports were done in accordance with Ukrainian legislation. The Ukrainian delegation went on to note that it also had defense cooperation with Russia and it had no way of knowing whether any Ukrainian weapons sold to Russia were used by Russian forces in Georgia. They also pressed the Russians on the separatists in South Ossetia and Abkhazia's use of Russian weapons, questioning whether Russia could say its arms transfers were in accordance with the WA. Ukraine claimed Russia armed, trained, and supported the separatist groups in violation of UN Security Council Resolution 1867. It was Russia's arming of the separatist groups that unfroze the conflicts.

15. (SBU) The U.S. presentation on the situation in Georgia (Reftel) was well-received due to its measured tone in that

it did not respond directly to the Russian accusations, but simply laid out U.S. arms transfer policies and confirmed that all transfers to Georgia were in accordance with those policies. (Comment: The U.S. delegation met with several Participating States prior to the meeting to coordinate a general approach to responding to Russian claims on Georgia. The consensus was that a response was needed, but that it should be low-key to avoid inflaming the issue in the Wassenaar context and having it affect other Wassenaar issues. End Comment.) After the U.S. and Ukrainian responses, Russia called on WA Participating States to look at the Initial Elements and adjust their policies to meet the basic objectives of the Wassenaar Arrangement, to prevent destabilizing accumulations such as those in Georgia.

16. (SBU) Arms Transparency: Four proposals for greater arms transparency (ammunition reporting; arms denial reporting and consultation; reporting on arms transfers between WA Participating States; and changes in the reporting of certain artillery systems) were all recommended for further discussion in 2009. Japan continued to publicly voice objections to the Russian proposal for intra-Wassenaar reporting, though several other Participating States privately voiced their objections to the proposal. There was discussion of establishing an experts group to define how artillery systems should be reported. The Russian delegation seeks the reporting of small caliber artillery systems (35mm) 75mm) under Category 3 of the Specific Information Exchange. The UK noted that, since small caliber artillery systems are primarily direct fire weapons, it would be more appropriate to report them under Category 8 (Small Arms/Light Weapons) than Category 3 (Large Caliber Artillery Systems), which deals with systems that are primarily indirect fire. The 2003 Assessment process looked at defining artillery by whether they are primarily direct fire or indirect fire weapons, and this issue had been actively discussed in the UN Register context in 2003 as well.

17. (SBU) Dual-Use Transparency: The GWG agreed to recommend continued discussion on the U.S. proposal for dual-use denial consultation.

18. (SBU) New Developments in Export Control Policies: Several Participating States briefed on changes to their export control systems. New Zealand noted that it now had implementation procedures in place for catch-all controls.

The UK briefed on changes to its arms brokering legislation that extends extraterritorial controls to cover MANPADS, small arms, and cluster munitions. Light weapons will be added to this control in April 2009; the UK is still discussing adding other weapons systems. As of April 6, 2009, the UK will control UK citizen transport providers associated with arms brokering activities. The UK has decided for now not to require pre-license registration for arms brokers, but it is looking at adding powers to revoke Open General Licenses for those that violate brokering controls. The UK also has a group of government and NGO representatives discussing ways to control non-listed dual-use items.

¶9. (C) MANPADS: The U.S., Australia, and UK briefed on recent MANPADS activities each had undertaken. The U.S. noted the OSCE) Mediterranean Partners MANPADS conference that had just occurred earlier in the week; Australia provide Participating States with copies of its updated MANPADS booklets; and the UK briefed on the study it co-sponsored with Australia on the economic impact of a MANPADS incident. In addition, the UK again made a pitch for Wassenaar to look in three areas for enhancing controls: transparency) are the controls capturing all items that should be captured, such as upgrades and add-ons; post-transfer checks) exchange information on how Participating States are conducting post-transfer checks; and developing generic elements for implementing the MANPADS guidelines.

¶10. (SBU) The remaining Best Practice proposals) Guidelines for Controlling Transportation of Conventional Arms; Internal Compliance Programs (ICP); and Re-Export Controls) were all recommended for further discussion. The Polish delegation said it had additional comments to the Russian proposal on Re-Export Controls, which it would soon submit in writing. Regarding the Japanese ICP proposal, France, speaking as EU President, expressed concern with the potential burden on small and medium enterprises that an ICP would entail. Japan promised to incorporate the comments it had received into a

new draft.

¶11. (U) LEOM: Switzerland agreed to assume the Chair of the 2009 Licensing and Enforcement Officers Meeting.

¶12. (SBU) Outreach: A number of countries, including Australia, Canada, the UK, and Spain reported on their bilateral outreach activities. Canada reported that it held a successful cross-Canada program of outreach to industry and had worked with the U.S. on a training program for Mexico. The UK and Spain reported on their training program in Chile. With regard to WA outreach activities, China and Israel were noted as targets for 2009 outreach, and the GWG agreed to recommend to the Plenary for WA to undertake post-plenary briefings for China, Israel, Kazakhstan, Belarus, Indonesia, and the UAE. The GWG also agreed that the WA should consider participating in outreach program organized by industry, but should not organize outreach seminars to industry specifically.

¶13. (SBU) The U.S. proposal for conducting a briefing on changes to the lists generated a substantial discussion. A significant number of Participating States supported the proposal in general terms, though several suggested the briefing be open to all non-Participating States. Russia questioned what the range of participants and the scope of work would be; Russia also commented that it had not once heard of a country asking for a technical briefing during Wassenaar Outreach meetings. Russia further opined it would not be possible to explain in a short seminar the changes it took the Experts Group (EG) six weeks to develop. Italy requested the EG chair be involved in re-drafting the proposal, since it would be the EG that has to conduct the briefings. A number of Participating States suggested that a revised draft be prepared that might be forwarded to the Plenary for decision. Canada agreed to work during the intercession with the U.S. to develop a new draft which would

refine the proposal and define the countries that could avail themselves of the briefing.

¶14. (SBU) On participation, the French, as EU President, issued strong support for Cyprus' renewed application for membership. The French noted that membership to the WA must be based solely on WA criteria) and on that basis Cyprus clearly merited membership. In response, Turkey merely noted its previous position of non-support for Cyprus' bid for membership.

¶15. (SBU) Administrative Issues: The 2009 Work Program and Budget were approved by the GWG to be forwarded to the Plenary for decision. The Friends of the Chair-WA Information System (FOC-WAIS) recommendations were also approved to be forwarded to the Plenary for decision. Austria offered to chair the FOC-WAIS group in 2009; the GWG supported this nomination and forwarded it to the Plenary for decision. The budget remained non-controversial, with Japan even praising the Secretariat's efforts at cost reductions. The Dutch confirmed acceptance of the GWG Chair for 2009, after Malta declined the seat at the spring GWG.

¶16. (SBU) The last issue raised (by Bulgaria, the Plenary Chair) was the possible extension of the contract for the current Head of the Secretariat, Ambassador Sune Danielsson, who is on detail from Sweden's foreign ministry. Ambassador Danielsson is eligible for retirement in 2010, one year after his contract with the Wassenaar Arrangement (through end of 2009) ends and is interested in remaining Head of Secretariat until end of 2010. There was no discussion; a decision on this extension request will need to be made during 2009.
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End Cable Text